

Early detection of Diabetes and related eye disease reduces the risk of vision loss in up to 90% cases

Diabetic retinopathy is cited as the primary cause of vision loss in adults



Abu Dhabi, July 2008 – If left undetected Diabetes retinopathy can lead to vision loss and blindness, according to eye specialist, Dr Chris Canning, Consultant Ophthalmologist/Vitreoretinal Surgeon, Imperial College London Diabetes Centre, and Chief Executive and Medical Director, Moorfields Eye Hospital Dubai.

Dr Canning said that eye disease in both type 1 and type 2 Diabetes patients can lead to total vision loss, however, this can be prevented in 90% of cases if Diabetes and retinopathy are diagnosed early.

More than 19.5% of the UAE population is said to be living with Diabetes.

“Diabetic retinopathy is a relatively common complication in individuals with Diabetes, although very often the patient will be unaware of the risks, hence regular checkups with an eye specialist are essential,” he said while speaking at a special media briefing at ICLDC.



Dr Canning said that retinopathy affects more than 2.5 million people worldwide and is found to be prevalent in 21% of type 2 Diabetes patients and almost everyone with type 1 Diabetes.

“In a nutshell, anyone living with Diabetes is at risk of developing some degree of impairment to vision,” he said.

Dr Canning advised that risk of vision loss can be minimised by maintaining blood glucose levels and blood pressure within the normal range.

He warned that there are very few symptoms during the early stages of Diabetic retinopathy and that vision may not change until the disease has advanced.

Meanwhile, Dr Maha Taysir Barakat, Consultant Endocrinologist and Medical & Research Director at ICLDC also stressed the benefits of early detection: “People living with Diabetes can reduce their risk for complications, such as retinopathy.

“We believe that education is crucial and ICLDC is committed to driving public health awareness on the treatment and prevention of Diabetes and its complications,” she stressed.

Dr Maha said that the early detection of pre-Diabetes can lead to the prevention of full blown Diabetes, and so greatly reduce the risk of related complications, such as blindness.

(Ends)

Notes to the Editor

About Imperial College London Diabetes Centre



The Imperial College London Diabetes Centre is a state-of-the-art, one-stop facility for out-patients that specialises in Diabetes Treatment, Research, Training and Public Health. Located in Abu Dhabi (next to the Zayed Military Hospital), ICLDC allows the highest level of specialised patient care, from first diagnosis to the continued management of all complications associated with Diabetes.

Imperial College London holds a renowned history and expertise in the study of Diabetes, bringing one of the leading medical academic institutions in the world to Abu Dhabi as a core working partner. Under ICLDC practices, one of the Centre's primary objectives is to provide continuing education for health professionals and the general public. For more details visit: www.icldc.ae

ICLDC has teamed up with another world-famous institute, Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, to provide eye care for their patients living with Diabetes. Moorfields has opened a branch in Dubai and is now collaborating with ICLDC to treat a range of eye patients in Abu Dhabi. For more details visit: www.moorfields.ae

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